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Letter dated 5 December 2005 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

With reference to my previous letter dated 14 October 2005 (S/2005/651), I have the honour to forward herewith a letter from Fuad Siniora, Prime Minister of Lebanon, addressed to you concerning the request of the Government of Lebanon to extend the mandate of the United Nations International Independent Investigation Commission on the assassination of the late Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri for a further period of six months, from 15 December 2005, with the possibility of an additional extension, in the light of the progress of the investigations into the terrorist crime of 14 February 2005.

I would be grateful if you would arrange for the present letter and its annex to be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Ibrahim **Assaf**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex to the letter dated 5 December 2005 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I would like to refer to Security Council resolution 1636 (2005) and my letter of 13 October 2005 (S/2005/651), in which I conveyed to you the request of the Government of Lebanon to extend the mandate of the United Nations International Independent Investigation Commission until mid-December 2005 in conformity with Security Council resolution 1595 (2005).

Further to our telephone conversation of 2 December 2005, and in line with the provisions of paragraphs 8 and 14 of resolution 1636 (2005), I would hereby like to convey to you the request of the Government of Lebanon, as agreed upon in its meeting on 1 December 2005, to extend the work of the Commission for a further period of six months from 15 December 2005, with the possibility of an additional extension in the light of the progress of the investigations into the terrorist crime of 14 February 2005. This extension will enable the Commission to continue assisting the competent Lebanese authorities in the ongoing investigations of the crime based on the report of Commissioner Detlev Mehlis to be submitted to the Security Council by mid-December, and to explore possible follow-up measures to the findings and recommendations of that report in order to bring the perpetrators of the said crime to justice.

I understand from Commissioner Mehlis that he does not wish to continue with the Commission beyond that date for personal and professional reasons. As I mentioned to you over the telephone, I would have liked Mr. Mehlis to continue in his duties at the head of the Commission, for he has demonstrated a high level of professionalism, objectivity and integrity in the exercise of his functions; and while respecting his choices, I would welcome any effort on your part to convince him to continue in his position if it is at all possible. If not, I trust Mr. Mehlis will be available for consultation to assure the transition in the work of the Commission to the new Commissioner. In that regard, I urge you to take the necessary steps to ensure that no gap occurs in the work of the Commission should the Security Council decide to extend its mandate. The Government of Lebanon remains committed to continuing to extend its full cooperation in the discharge of the duties of the Commission, according to the arrangements and modalities that you deem fit.

(*Signed*) Fuad **Siniora**